

FRAGMENTS OF MOMENTS

Though I have been to Spain on two occasions, this time, it was my first in Madrid. The journey brought me all the way from Lagos and straight into the heart of Madrid: I was lodged in a hotel right at the mouth of “Peurta del sol” just in front of the metro “sol”. Beneath and around me were the countless shopping malls and endless touristic activities. I arrived in Madrid when all of Spain is bustling between two juxtaposed events: soccer and summer! Spirit was high because the Spanish football team was winning all the way, setting historical records and people were just too happy and you could tell from how much shopping there was. Not that I am so much of a fan of soccer, but I find this mixture quite interesting. I know that summer is usually a big event; I always say that’s when people come out from hibernation and into the open to sun their wings and limbs. But with soccer this time, summer was different in Spain.

As a tourist myself (considering I would just be in and out of within a space of ten days), the only clue I had of Madrid is what my eyes could see and what my emotions could align or contrast with. I decided the best way was to work right straight from my door step. So every morning I wake up to the hot burning but pleasant sun of summer, with my camera, I wander the streets. Owing to the fact that my Spanish was completely non-existent, it was easy for just one word to make a difference especially if you run into it every second: “Rabajas!” Few days later I found myself saying “Madrid has been inflicted with the spirit of *Rabajas*”

But what I found yet more interesting is that this occasion placed me in a space of bubbling activities, people so engrossed with their leisurely preoccupations, that I am hardly noticed, it’s like I have been permitted to observe without being observed. I had no guide, no friend nor colleague with whom I could have engaged in even the smallest talks, I never had a proper conversation with anyone, I was just observing. Everything was to me an image, of which I have to reconcile its meaning from within me as there was no external information to anchor to.

Therefore my works from Madrid could be seen as fragments of in-built experiences trying to find its counterpart in a space where I have only the option of seeing through the eyes of my emotions. I loved this way of working, something I was already exploring in previous projects, which is the major reason for consenting to the “Africa.es” project.